



Tip #6

is your safety seat secure in the car?

To do its job, a child safety seat must be held securely against the vehicle seat back. If the lap part of the safety belt is not tight or the safety seat slides around on the vehicle seat, your child may not be protected.

Always read the instructions that come with the safety seat. Also read the section on safety belts and child safety seats (child restraints) in your vehicle owner's book (A). If you cannot attach your seat tightly, call your vehicle customer service number for help or the Auto Safety Hotline at 1-800-424-9393.

WARNING: Children age 12 and under should ride in the back seat. **Never** put an infant (less than one year old) rear facing in the front of a car with a passenger air bag. **Infants** must always ride in the back seat facing the **rear** of the car.

How Tightly Should a Safety Seat Be Attached?

The lap part of the belt must hold the safety seat firmly in place. To make it tight, push the safety seat down into the seat cushion while you tighten the belt around it. Push down on it with your full weight to get the belt really tight (B) (D).

To check for a tight fit, pull the safety seat forward and push it from side to side. If the belt loosens (C) or the base of the safety seat slides forward or sideward more than an inch, your child may not be well protected.

If the safety seat moves, first try another seat location in your vehicle with a different kind of belt. The lap belt in the middle of the back seat may work best to keep your safety seat in place.

Which Kinds of Belts Are in Your Vehicle?

There are **lap belts** that hold the hips and **lap/shoulder belts** that hold the hips and one shoulder. There are several kinds of **retractors** to take up slack and **latchplates** that fit in the buckle. Read the following pages for the ways the belts, retractors, and latchplates in vehicles work.

Many vehicles have belts that stay loose while you drive and lock up in a crash. This sheet will tell you how to make this kind of belt stay tight.

The owner's manual for recent vehicles tells you about using belts for child safety seats. Starting with the 1996 model year, vehicles **MUST** have safety belts designed to stay tight around safety seats.